

Message Text

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ACTION AID-31

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2108

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FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, BC
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES

REF: (A) STATE 101448, (B) STATE 102727, (C) MBABANE 0986,
(D) GABORONE 0812, (E) 77 GABORONE 3067

1. DEPARTMENT AND AID/W EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS
CONTENT OF AID PROGRAMS, PARTICULARLY BY BREATHING LIFE INTO
SECT 116 (E) FAA, MOST WELCOME. GOB CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT
BOTH PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS DESIRE TO
PROMOTE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS, RULE OF LAW
AND RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL IN USG FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.
ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO ACCOMPLISH U.S. OBJECTIVES IS TO RECOG-
NIZE AND SUPPORT THE VERY FEW RECIPIENTS OF U.S. ECONOMIC ASSIS-
TANCE WHICH ALREADY SHARE WITH US A COMMITMENT TO THESE FUNDA-
MENTAL PRINCIPLES.

2. WE WERE THEREFORE GRATIFIED THAT DEPARTMENT AND AID/W
RECOGNIZED BOTSWANA'S EXEMPLARY HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD AND PLACED
IT IN THE FIRST RANK OF COUNTRIES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR
HUMAN-RIGHTS-RELATED AID PROGRAMS (PARA 8, REF B). HOW-
EVER, WE SEE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT ARISE IN IMPLI-
MENTATION OF SUGGESTION THAT GOB SEND INTERNS FOR FOUR-
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MONTH PROGRAMS WITH ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN HUMAN RIGHTS
WORK:

A. GOB WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO RELEASE SCARCE
UNIVERSITY GRADUATES AND VIVIL SERVANTS FOR RELATIVELY
LONG-TERM INTERNSHIPS ABROAD.

B. REFUGEE-RELATED TRAINING AND ACTIVITIES IN BOT-
SWANA ARE ADMINISTERED PRIMARILY BY UNHCR. MOREOVER,

BOTSWANA'S VERY THIN EDUCATED CLASS ALREADY HAS DEEP COMMITMENT TO PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW. INTERNSHIPS ON THESE SUBJECTS FOR MOST OF THESE PEOPLE WOULD BE PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED. IT WOULD DO LITTLE TO MORE DEEPLY INCULCATE THESE VALUES OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND NON-RACIALISM IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF STRAINS IMPOSED BY UNSETTLED SECURITY SITUATION IN RHODESIA, INFLUX OF REFUGEES, ETC.

C. INTERNSHIP PROGRAM WOULD NOT REACH THE POOREST OF THE PEOPLE AND WOULD ONLY INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR CAPACITY TO PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THEIR COUNTRY'S MODERN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM IS BASED.

3. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS, EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT OUR SUGGESTION (REF D) TO PROVIDE PROJECTORS AND FILMS FOR USE THROUGHOUT BOTSWANA WOULD BEST INTEGRATE HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. CONCEPTS OF CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS WHICH WE SHARE WITH GOB ARE OFTEN DIFFICULT TO ARTICULATE TO POOR MAJORITY BECAUSE THEY DO NOT LEND THEMSELVES TO SYSTEMATIC PRESENTATION IN THE FORM OF AN IDEOLOGY SUCH AS MARXISM/LENINISM. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE MOST PERSUASIVE WAY TO MAKE A CASE FOR OUR PRINCIPLES IS TO SHOW HOW OUR SOCIETY, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND OTHER SIMILARLY ORGANIZED SOCIETIES, ACTUALLY OPERATE. THE ATTRACTION OF THE VARIETY, PLURALISM AND VITALITY OF AMERICAN LIFE IS A POTENTIALLY POWERFUL INSTRUMENT FOR INFLUENCING THE ATTITUDES OF BATSWANA ABOUT DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS HUMAN RIGHTS. THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO PROJECT THIS MESSAGE THAN BY THE MEDIUM OF FILMS WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATION OR EVEN LITERACY AMONG CONSUMERS. IN A COUNTRY AS LARGE AND UNDERDEVELOPED AS BOTSWANA, IT CERTAINLY IS THE BEST, AND MAYBE THE ONLY, WAY TO INVOLVE THE POOREST OF THE PEOPLE IN THESE ACTIVITIES.

B. ONCE PROJECTORS ARE PLACED IN BOTSWANA'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT COUNCILS, GOB WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO MAKE USE OF THEM FOR OTHER DEVELOPMENT-ORIENTED INFORMATION ACTIVITIES. ONE OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL BASIC HUMAN NEEDS IS COMMUNICATION, PARTICULARLY BUILDING OF BRIDGES BETWEEN THE RELATIVELY DEVELOPED URBAN AREAS AND THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE STILL DO NOT ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE MONEY ECONOMY OR DEVELOPMENT-RALATED ACTIVITIES. THE MEDIUM OF FILM IS OFTEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO INVOLVE THE MAJORITY IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS RANGING FROM LAND TENURE TO FAMILY PLANNING.

C. PROVISION OF PROJECTORS AND FILMS WOULD NOT REQUIRE PROLONGED ABSENCES OF TRAINED PERSONNEL WHICH WOULD CREATE A DRAIN ON BOTSWANA'S PERSONNEL RESOURCES. INSTEAD IT WOULD PROVIDE A RELATIVELY QUICK AND EFFECTIVE INFUSION OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD DEMONSTRATE USG CONCERN FOR CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS IN CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT.

4. ABOVE ALL, WE MUST REALIZE THAT USG INACTION IN IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE HUMAN-RIGHTS-RELATED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WOULD SIGNIFY INDIFFERENCE. IF WE FAIL TO MOVE QUICKLY ENOUGH, OUR OPPORTUNITY TO INTEREST GOB IN PROJECTS OF THIS TYPE MAY WELL BE LOST. THEREFORE, EMBASSY WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT AND AID/W CONSIDERATION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OUR DETAILED PROPOSAL (REF D) WITH VIEW TO EARLY APPROVAL.
ALBERTI

NOTE BY OCT: MESSAGE DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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